The Blessings of Eid And Our Negligence

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O

The virtues of the night of Eid

حَدِيْث: عن ابي امامة τ عن النبي υ قال من قام ليلـةيَ العيدَين محتسبًا لم يمتْ قلبه يوم تموت القلوب (رواه ابن ماجه)

Hadhrat Abu Umamah τ narrates that Rasulullaah ρ said, "The heart of the person who stands in worship on the two nights of Eid (Eidul Fitr and Eidul Adhaa), shall not die on the day that hearts will die (on the Day of Qiyaamah)." {Ibn Maajah as quoted in Targheeb}

EXPLANATION: According to a narration of Tabraani, Rasulullaah ρ cited this reward for the person who "gave life to" the nights of Eidul Fitr and Eidul Adhaa. This means that the person engaged in Ibaadah (acts of worship) during these nights, which include Dhikr, Tasbeeh, joining family ties and doing other forms of good as well. One should bear in mind that treating one's family and friends with love and affection and ensuring that one's relationship with them remains cordial is also an act of Ibaadah which one may engage in during these auspicious nights.

The meaning of Rasulullaah ρ's statement that such a person's heart will not die on the Day of Qiyaamah is that this person will not appear to be in a state of intoxication like other people who will seem to be drunk because of their extreme fear and worry. This fearful and comatose condition of people will be a dreadful form of punishment which will result from the frightful nature of the Day of Qiyaamah. While people will be suffering

like this, the person who devoted the nights of Eid to Allaah's worship shall be receiving bounties and will be far removed from distress. They shall remain happy with every type of bounty at their feet. May Allaah include us amongst these fortunate people.

It is therefore apparent that the nights of Eid are extremely virtuous and should be appreciated. We can show our appreciation by reciting Durood and engaging in Dhikr and other forms of Ibaadah during these nights. If one is unable to stay awake the entire night, one should spend as much time as possible engaged in Ibaadah. The very least that one can do is to perform the Isha and Fajr salaah in congregation (Jamaa'ah) together with Takbeer Ula (the very beginning of the salaah when the Imaam says "Allaahu Akbar"). Between these two salaahs, one should try to engage in Dhikr and other forms of Ibaadah to the best of one's ability. By doing this, it is strongly hoped that Allaah shall not deprive one of the immense rewards of these nights.

Five Blessed Nights

حَدِيْث: عن معاذ بن جبل τ قال قال رسول الله υ من احيا الليال الخمس وجبت له الجنة ؛ ليلة التروية و ليلة عرفة و ليلة النحر و ليلة الفطر و ليلة النصف من شعبان (رواه الاصفهاني)

Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal τ narrates that Rasulullaah ρ said, "Jannah is compulsory for the person who gives life to five nights; (these nights are) the night of Tarwiyah (8th Dhul Hijjah), the night of Arafah (9th Dhul Hijjah), the night of Nahr (Eidul Adhaa viz. 10th Dhul Hijjah), the night of Eidul Fitr and the night in the middle of Shabaan (15th Shabaan). {Isfahaani}

EXPLANATION: The above Hadith makes it clear that that person who engages in Ibaadah during five nights among which are the nights of the two Eids, shall have the great boon of Jannah as his/her reward. To sacrifice only five nights from the hundreds of nights in a year is not such a difficult task when one considers that many nights one sacrifices for worldly activities. We find so many night watchmen staying awake the entire night just as many other people do when their employment requires them to work the night-shift. When these people do this for small monetary gains, why should one not sacrifice just as few nights to be saved from the terrible chastisement of the Day of Qiyaamah and to enter the everlasting bliss of Jannah? This is certainly not beyond us! We should therefore fight Shaytaan and our carnal passions to resolve that we shall not waste these valuable nights. We should use Dhikr, Ibaadah, Tasbeeh and all acts of virtue to give life to these nights to the best of our ability.

Failing to Appreciate the Night of Eid

The Ahadeeth mentioned above clearly spell out the great virtues of the night of Eidul Fitr (which falls on the 1st of Shawwaal). It is regrettable that instead of benefiting from the blessings of this night, we waste the opportunity. Worse still is that fact that instead of reaping the rewards of the night, we accumulate sins to our names by engaging in frivolous, nonsensical and sinful acts. Examples of such acts are:

- Some people spend these valuable nights in fruitless games such as chess, Ludu, Karem Board and other modern games. Although chess is Haraam, many of the other games also fall into this category because they do not

comply with the conditions that make them permissible. In fact, even if such a game is permissible, this night is not meant for play and sport. It should be spent in Ibaadah and all games should be shunned.

- Many people waste their time watching television programmes which incorporate many sins, thus making them Haraam to view even though they may be religious or educational in nature. In fact, the sin is compounded when it takes place during this blessed night. It is therefore necessary to abstain from the accursed practice of watching television at all times, especially during this holy night.

- Then there are those Muslims who while the night away wandering about the shopping centres to look at the decorations, lights and merchandise. They spend most of the night (if not all of it) in these places whereas the marketplaces are the most hated places on earth in the sight of Allaah. Because of their despised nature, it is noticed that the marketplaces host the most sins of almost every type. It is here that one finds bejewelled and adorned women display their charms as they go about their shopping. Such place are also not short of music, deceit, lies, swearing, backbiting, cheating, fighting and every other type of sin. It is therefore essential that places of trade and commerce should be visited only when necessary, otherwise they become a means of involving people in sin. By visiting such places during the blessed night of Eid would earn us punishment instead of rewards. In addition to this, visiting a place that Allaah detests will cast us far from His mercy and benevolence.

- Some people pass the night drinking cold or hot beverages in restaurants, all the time engaging in futile and often Haraam talk. In this manner, they deprive themselves of

the valuable night even if they somehow manage to abstain from sin.

- There are also many people who have a strong connection with Deen and know about the virtues of this night, yet they fail to give it its due importance. To make matters worse, when they are reminded about its importance, they interject by saying that engaging in Ibaadah on this night is neither Fardh nor Waajib. We accept that it is neither Fardh nor Waajib, however, will Allaah and His Rasool ρ encourage Ibaadah on this night for no good reason? If we reject this encouragement by saying that it is neither Fardh nor Waajib, who will do it? If the learned ones regard it as unimportant and the ignorant ones do not attach due importance to it because of their ignorance, which person from the Ummah will ever do it? Ponder awhile! It is not a means of great deprivation to lose out on Allaah's pleasure and the tremendous reward of Jannah? Do we have this reward already? If not, we should seek forgiveness for our indifferent attitude.

- Instead of reducing their involvement in worldly matters, some business people intensify their worldly activities during this night. In fact, they become so engrossed in trade that they even forgo their Fardh salaah, which cannot be justified under any circumstances. If such business people are unable to curtail their business engagements to busy themselves in Ibaadah, they should at least perform their Isha and Fajr salaah with Jamaa'ah and engage in Dhikr and du'aa as they go about their business work. In this manner they will at least accrue some of the benefits of this auspicious night.

The bottom line is one's concern and appreciation of this night. If a person has even a bit of concern for the Aakhirah, s/he will make a concerted effort to benefit from the night despite the

most trying obstacles. On the other hand, a person who does not share this concern and who gives importance only to matters of this world will not be inclined towards this and will find every excuse to evade it. As a result, s/he will stand deprived of the blessings of this night. May Allaah save us from such deprivation. Aameen.

Do not Pollute your Eid

The day of Eidul Fitr is a day of joy and happiness for the Muslims. Their happiness is on account of the ability that Allaah granted them to observe the fasts of Ramadhaan, the ability to perform the Taraaweeh salaah and because He afforded them the great honour of listening to and reciting the Qur'aan. Both the night of Eid as well as the day of Eid enjoy great status in the sight of Allaah.

Forgiveness and Rewards on the Night and Day of Eid

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ narrates that he heard Rasulullaah ρ say, "Jannah is made fragrant with perfume and incense in preparation for the coming of Ramadhaan. For the coming of Ramadhaan, Jannah thus was prepared from the beginning to the end of the year. When the first night of Ramadhaan arrives, a breeze blows from beneath the Arsh of Allaah which causes the leaves to rustle and the handles of the gates to rattle in such a manner that they produce such beautiful sounds that none has ever heard before. Thereafter, the stunning damsels of Jannah with attractive eyes emerge from their homes and stand on the balconies of Jannah and announce, 'Is there anyone who wishes to propose for us so

that Allaah may marry him to us?’ They then ask Ridwaan the gatekeeper of Jannah, ‘What night is this?’ He replies, ‘At your service! This is the first night of Ramadhaan. The gates of Jannah have been opened for the Ummah of Rasulullaah ρ.’”

“Allaah then commands Ridwaan to open all the gates of Jannah and orders Maalik (the gatekeeper of Jahannam) to shut all the gates of Jahannam for those among the Ummah of Rasulullaah ρ who observe the fast. Allaah then addresses Hadhrat Jibra’eel υ saying, ‘Go to earth, capture all the rebellious Shayaateen, place yokes around their necks and cast them into the ocean so that they do not spoil the fasts of those belonging to the Ummah of Rasulullaah ρ.’”

Rasulullaah ρ has also mentioned that each night of Ramadhaan Allaah instructs a caller to announce three times, “Is there anyone with a request so that I may fulfil the request? Is there anyone willing to turn towards Me so that I may turn towards him? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness so that I may forgive him? Who is it that can give a loan to One Who is wealthy and shall never get bankrupt; Who gives benevolently without suffering any shortfall?”

Rasulullaah ρ has also mentioned that at every time of Iftaar Allaah sets free from Jahannam a million souls who had become deserving of entry into Jahannam. When the last night of Ramadhaan arrives, Allaah sets free from Jahannam as many souls as He had set free from the beginning of Ramadhaan. When night of Qadr arrives, Allaah instructs Hadhrat Jibra’eel υ to proceed to earth with a large army of angels carrying a green flag which is placed on top of the Kabah. Hadhrat Jibra’eel υ has a hundred wings, two of which are spread out only on this night and they span the entire horizon from east to west.

Hadhrat Jibra'eel υ then commands the angels to greet, shake hands and say "Aameen" to the du'aas of those Muslims who are performing salaah and are engaged in Dhikr whether they are standing or sitting. This continues throughout the night until the break of dawn when Hadhrat Jibra'eel υ calls the angels back. When the angels return, they ask Hadhrat Jibra'eel υ what Allaah's response was to the du'aas of the Ummah of Rasulullaah ρ. Hadhrat Jibra'eel υ informs them that Allaah turned His attention to these Mu'mineen and forgave all of them except four persons. When the angels ask who the four unfortunate persons are, the following persons are named:

1. A drunkard
2. The person who disobeys his parents
3. The person who severs family ties
4. The person who harbours enmity for another and has severed ties with the person.

When the night of Eid finally arrives, it is referred to as the "night of prize-giving" in the heavens. When the morning of Eid comes, Allaah dispatches angels to all the streets and alleys on earth where they stand to make an announcement that all of creation besides man and jinn can hear. The announcement is: "O Ummah of Rasulullaah ρ! Proceed to the court of that Magnanimous Rabb who gives in abundance and forgives the worst sins." When the people proceed to the place where the Eid salaah is performed, Allaah asks the angels, "What should be the payment of that labourer who has completed his work?" The angels reply, "O our Rabb! O our Master! He should be paid in full." Allaah then announces, "O My angels! I make you witness to the fact that I have granted them My pleasure for the fasts and Taraaweeh salaah they have observed." Allaah then addresses the people saying, "O My servants! Ask from Me. I swear by My honour and My grandeur that I shall grant whatever you ask Me in this gathering for the welfare of your

Aakhirah and that I shall decide in your favour whether to grant you the things of this world that you ask for. I swear by My honour that I shall conceal your faults as long as you are thinking of Me. I swear by My honour and My grandeur that I shall never disgrace you in front of your enemies. Now return to your homes in the state that you are forgiven. You have pleased Me and I am pleased with you." The angels then express their joy and happiness at the rewards that people receive on this day.

The Ahadeeth therefore tell us that the morning and entire day of Eid is a time when Allaah's boons and pleasure are derived. It is unfortunate indeed that we make it a day of earning Allaah's displeasure. To make matters worse, we do not even realise that the acts we do on this blessed day are sinful.

We shall now mention some such acts with the hope that some servant of Allaah may take heed and receive the ability from Allaah to practise. May Allaah grant us all the ability to refrain from these evils. Aameen.

Eid Cards

Our societies are accustomed to exchanging Eid cards on the occasion of both Eids. Whether a Muslim is learned or ignorant, he takes pride in sending not only one, but several Eid cards to others. Weeks before the arrival of Eid people will be seen in bookstores purchasing their cards. The marketplaces are filled with cards of every quality, with the best of cards costing the best of money. No one seems to think that sending cards is a sin and they continue doing so with the conception that it is a sophisticated manner of expressing good wishes to others.

The fact is that Eid cards are a waste of money and are therefore “Haraam” according to the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth. In addition to this, they are an imitation of the ways of the Kuffaar. Not only will Muslims be guilty of the grave sin of imitating the enemies of Islaam, but this practice holds many more harms. It is therefore evident that the practice of exchanging Eid cards is certainly not permissible. It is compulsory for Muslims to shun this wasteful practice. The other harms of exchanging Eid cards are:

❖ Many Eid cards display pictures of animate objects such as doves, parrots and other colourful birds or animals whereas drawing, printing, photographing, liking and looking at pictures of animate objects are not permissible.

❖ The themes of many Eid cards are based on popular films, actors or actresses. What doubt remains about the impermissibility of such cards?

❖ Some Eid cards even display full colour photos of naked or semi-naked women. Viewing, printing and buying such cards constitute a grave sin.

❖ Many Eid cards contain verses of the Qur'aan. Since these cards are often thrown away, utter disrespect is therefore shown to the Qur'aanic verses. Such sacrilege cannot be condoned.

❖ Great competition exists between people exchanging Eid cards. Because each person wants his/her card to be the best and most remembered, people spend large sums of money to buy the best cards. This is sheer vanity, ostentation and extravagance. In fact, the sin is compounded because the competition exists in a “Haraam” matter.

- People who cannot afford expensive cards or cannot even purchase any at all are ridiculed. Whereas ridiculing a person is a sin in the first place, ridiculing someone for not doing something that is impermissible is an even greater sin.

- The tit-for-tat practice is customary in many places. Eid cards are therefore given only to people who give such cards to others whereas those who do not give cards do not receive any either. One should bear in mind that tit-for-tat practises in impermissible matters are also not permissible.

- Some Eid cards have wasteful features such as being fragranced or heavily decorated. Even though these cards may contain inscriptions of the Haramayn or the names of Rasulullaah ρ’s family, they constitute sheer extravagance and imitation of the Kuffaar. Therefore they are still not permissible.

- The custom of exchanging Eid cards had reached such a height that although many Muslims do not even observe their fasts in Ramadhaan and do not pay their Sadaqatul Fitr, they would not forget to purchase the most elaborate Eid cards as if this were a bounden duty. How tragic!

- Many Muslims dwell under the misconception that conveying Eid greeting is imperative, even if it be by means of telephone, telegraph, fax or any other means. This notion is clearly incorrect.

Apart from all the above, thousands and millions are squandered annually on Eid cards. If his money was spent on the poor and needy, poverty would be alleviated, the ill could be cured and the hungry would be fed.

May Allaah grant us all the ability to think clearly and shun this evil sin. Aameen.

Eid Preparations

Another evil that has crept into the Muslim society is that of “Eid preparations”, which is elaborate on the occasion of Eidul Fitr and somewhat less on the occasion of Eidul Adhaa. It is an acknowledged fact that the two Eids are occasions of joy and happiness. In fact, the Shari'ah even encourages Muslims to wear their best clothing on these days. However, the flood of extravagance and wastage that has marked the occasion in this regard has no bearing with the Shari'ah.

Nowadays it is deemed compulsory for a person to purchase new clothing for every member of the family even though he does not have the means to do so. Every item of clothing from shoes to hats are bought for the entire family, the house is also decorated in the process and cards are sent to relatives and friends wherever they may be.

As a result, the occasions of Eid have become a financial burden for people with average earnings. When such people cannot earn enough to cater for the endless demands of their families, they resort to illegal means of earning.

The least harm that this custom produces is that people are involved in shopping rather than Ibaadah during the precious days of Ramadhaan and especially during the last ten nights of Ramadhaan and the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah. Whereas these are moments when they ought to be in communion with Allaah, they are wandering about the shopping centres.

Hugging and Shaking Hands

We shall first focus on some Ahadeeth of Rasulullaah ρ concerning Musaafaha (shaking hands) and Mu'aanaqah (hugging).

❖ Hadhrat Hudhayfah τ narrates that Rasulullaah ρ said, "When one Mu'min meets another Mu'min, greets him with Salaam and shakes his hand, the sins of both fall away from them just as the leaves fall off a tree (during the autumn)." {Targheeb wat Tarheeb Vol. 2 Pg. 433}

❖ Hadhrat Baraa bin Aazib τ narrates that Rasulullaah ρ said, "When two Muslims meet and shake hands, they are forgiven even before they even part from each other." {Targheeb wat Tarheeb Vol. 2 Pg. 432}

❖ Hadhrat Abu Umaamah τ reports that Rasulullaah ρ said, "The completion of your greeting is the shaking of your hands." {Tirmidhi, as quoted in Mishkaat Pg. 76}

❖ Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood τ reports that Rasulullaah ρ said, "Shaking hands is the completion of a greeting." {Tirmidhi Vol. 2 Pg. 115}

❖ Hadhrat Aa'isha رضي الله عنها narrates that Rasulullaah ρ who was once at her house when Hadhrat Zaid bin Haaritha τ returned to Madinah from a journey. When he came to meet Rasulullaah ρ, he knocked at the door and (in a hurry to meet him) Rasulullaah ρ hurried to the door wearing only his lower garment. Rasulullaah ρ then hugged Hadhrat Zaid τ and kissed him. Hadhrat Aa'isha رضي الله عنها says that never before had she seen Rasulullaah ρ meet anyone in this

manner nor ever afterwards. {Tirmidhi, as quoted in Mishkaat Pg. 402}

- ❖ Narrating his return from Abyssinia, Hadhrat Ja'far bin Abi Taalib τ says that when he reached Madinah, Rasulullaah ρ met him and hugged him. {Mishkaat Pg. 402}

- ❖ THE PRACTICE OF THE SAHABAH ψ WITH REGARDS TO MUSAAFAHA AND MU'AANAQAH: Hadhrat Anas τ narrates that the Sahabah ψ used to shake hands with each other when they met and would hug each other when they returned from a journey. {Targheeb wat Tarheeb Vol. 3 Pg. 433}

The above Ahadeeth and others make it clear that when Rasulullaah ρ and the Sahabah ψ met with each other they would greet with Salaam and then shake hands. They would hug each other only when returning from a journey. There was no special day which they reserved for Musaafaha and Mu'aanaqah. This is the Sunnah practice of Musaafaha and Mu'aanaqah which will earn rewards. None can prevent another from this manner of Musaafaha and Mu'aanaqah.

Therefore, if a person shook hands with a friend or relative on the day of Eid without regarding this to be a compulsory practice, there is no harm in this. Similarly, if a friend or relative arrived from a journey and one hugged him on the day of Eid also without regarding it to be a compulsory practice, he will actually be rewarded for practising a Sunnah act. However, it is not permissible to practise Musaafaha and Mu'aanaqah thinking it to be a compulsory or Sunnah practice of the day of Eid. Unfortunately, this has become a custom and has to be shunned because it has no basis in the Shari'ah and our pious elders have classified it as an act of Bid'ah (innovation in Deen).

Eid Greetings

Research reveals that no authentic Hadith supports conveying Eid greetings to each other. However, there has always been a difference of opinion in this regard and the following five verdicts have been tendered:

- ❖ Permissible
- ❖ Allowed without reward (Mubaah)
- ❖ Recommended (with reward)
- ❖ Makrooh (undesirable)
- ❖ Bid’ah (innovation and sinful).

Therefore, the Eid greeting would be permissible if conveyed with the following conditions:

- ❖ It should not be regarded as Fardh, Waajib, Sunnah or similar to these
- ❖ Someone who does not convey such a greeting should not be looked down upon or reprimanded in any way
- ❖ The Sunnah Salaam should be said even if accompanied by any Sunnah du’aa such as:

تَقَبَّلَ اللهُ مِنَّا وَ مِنْكَ

However, if a person exceeds these limits and regards the greeting to be Sunnah, Waajib or Fardh (thereby giving it a status higher than it should have), the act will be Makrooh and impermissible.

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1423 - 2003